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Message Text

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44
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 IO-11 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAL-01 DLOS-04 OES-03 OFA-01 /086 W
---------- 061300
R 121534Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7333
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMCONSUL CURACAO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, NA, NL
SUBJ: DUTCH ATTITUDES ON FUTURE OF ANTILLES

1. ON THE HEELS OF SURINAMESE INDEPENDENCE, PERHAPS SOME OBSER-
VATIONS ON DUTCH ATTITUDES TOWARD QUESTION OF INDEPENDNENCE FOR
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES ARE IN ORDER.

2. FIRST, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THERE IS NO GROUP OR BODY
OF OPINION IN HOLLAND WHICH ADVOCATES CONTINUING "COLONIAL"
SITUATION. WHILE ANTILLES ARE NOT REALLY COLONIES (THEY,
AS DID SURINAM PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 25, ENJOY FULL AUTONOMY
IN EVERYTHING BUT FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE), SITUATION APPEARS
TOO CLOSE TO COLONIAL STATUS FOR THE COMFORT OF PRESENT-DAY
DUTCHMEN. MANY NETHERLANDERS WALK ON EGGS WHEN SUBJECT OF NETH.
ANTILLES IS RAISED AS IF FEARFUL THAT THEY OR COUNTRY WILL BE
TARRED WITH BURSH OF COLONIALISM.

3. WITH THAT SAID, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT GON POSITION ON
FUTURE OF NETH. ANTILLES IS ONE OF "INDEPENDENCE WHEN YOU FEEL
YOU ARE READY." AT SAME TIME, GON WANTS TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO
SEEM TO BE PUSHING GONA INTO PREMATURE REQUEST FOR TALKS ON INDE-
PENDENCE. THUS, NO TARGET DATE IS EVER MENTIONED. ONE GREAT FEAR
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IS THAT SETTING DATE FOR INDEPENDNENCE WOULD HAVE SAME EFFECT

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AS IS DID IN SURINAM, I.E. CAUSING MASSIVE IMMIGRATION TO HOLLAND
TO PRESERVE DUTCH NATIONALITY. THIS SITUATION RESULTED IN
SURINAM'S LOSS OF MANY SKILLED WORKERS AND HOLLAND'S GAIN OF
WELFARE AND RACE PROBLEMS. IN PRIVATE, DUTCH OFFICIALS SAY THAT IT
WILL PERHAPS TAKE TEN YEARS BEFORE ANTILLES ARE READY TO ACCEPT
INDEPENDENCE, ALTHOUGH THEY CONCEDE THAT CIRCUMSTANCES COULD CHANGE
AT ANY TIME TO SHORTEN TIME FRAME.

4. MAJOR PROBLEM ARAS AS SEEN FROM HERE INCLUDE DELIMITATION OF
CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY BETWEEN VENEZUELA AND ANTILLES,
AND REVISION OF NETH. ANTILLES STATUTE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO EASE
FEARS OF DOMINANCE BY CURACAO OF SMALLER ISLANDS. DUTCH OFFICIALS
FEEL IT WOULD BE FOOLISH FOR ARUBA, BONAIRE, OR THE SMALL
WINDWARD ISLANDS TO BREAK AWAY AND REALLY DO NOT EXPECT IT
TO HAPPEN, EVEN THOUGH INTER-ISLAND JEALOUSIES ARE GREAT
AND WINDWARDS ARE FAR REMOVED FROMTHEIR LARGER PARTNERS. AN
INDEPENDENT ANTILLES STATE, EVEN ONE WHICH GAINED ITS INDEPENDNECE
VERY SOON, WOULD PROBABLY BE AS VIABLE AS MANY RECENT CREATIONS,
AND MORE SO THAN SOME. BUT, UNLESS INDEPENDENCE SENTIMENT IN THE
ISLANDS THEMSELVES CHANGES RAPIDLY, THE TRUNCATED DUTCH REALM
WILL LIKELY BE AROUND FOR SEVERAL MORE YEARS IN ITS CURRENT FORM-
--A VOLUNTARY PARTNERSHIP OF THE NETHERLANDS AND THE NETHERLANDS
ANTILLES.
GOULD

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